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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/501,308	10/18/2004	Flom H Douglas	5570WOUS	6115

30173 7590 12/13/2005

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MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55440

EXAMINER

DURAND, PAUL-R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3721

DATE MAILED: 12/13/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/501,308	Applicant(s) DOUGLAS, FLOM H	
	Examiner Paul Durand	Art Unit 3721	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 April 2005.
2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 31-33 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 31-33 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 13 July 2004 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 03/05.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. New corrected drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in this application because the drawings appear to be photocopies from an original set, which make it hard to discern certain items of the applicant's invention, as well as mask some parts, such as figure 4a. Applicant is advised to employ the services of a competent patent draftsman outside the Office, as the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office no longer prepares new drawings. The corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The requirement for corrected drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 31 and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Tisma (US 5,170,610).

In regard to claim 31, Tisma discloses the invention as claimed including a transfer system acting in cooperation with a bagger (not shown, but upstream of conveyor 46) and a cartoner system (not shown, but downstream of direction "A"). The conveyor self adjusting to support asynchronous or independent operation of the bagger

and cartoner (see abstract, Fig.1 and C3,L24-62).

In regard to claim 33, Tisma discloses the invention as claimed including a transfer system, bagger system and cartoner, where the operation of the bagger is uncoupled (unattached) to the cartoner (see abstract, Fig.1 and C3,L24-62).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claim 32 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tisma in view of Reuter et al (US 4,262,470).

Tisma discloses the invention substantially as claimed including a transfer system acting in cooperation with a bagger (not shown, but upstream of conveyor 46) and a cartoner system (not shown, but downstream of direction "A"). The conveyor self adjusting to support asynchronous or independent operation of the bagger and cartoner (see abstract, Fig.1 and C3,L24-62). What Tisma does not disclose is the specific use of a vertical bagger to package the product. However, Reuter teaches that it is old and well known in the art of packaging to provide a machine with a vertical (VFFS, generally indicated at 20) bagger which bags product and then places the product on an outgoing conveyor 75, for the purpose of packaging and shipping a product to a further manufacturing operation (see Figs. 1,2,4 and C2,L48 – C3,L39).

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Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have provided the invention of Tisma with the vertical bagging means as taught by Reuter for the purpose of packaging and shipping a product to a further manufacturing operation.

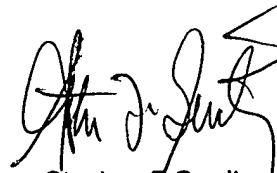
Conclusion

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Paul Durand whose telephone number is 571-272-4459. The examiner can normally be reached on 0730-1800, Monday - Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rinaldi I. Rada can be reached on 571-272-4467. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Paul Durand
December 5, 2005



Stephen F. Gerrity
Primary Examiner